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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2002

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

AKP candidates lobby for Prime Minister post - Milliyet
Calling card shock - Hurriyet
Erdogan's day of destiny - Hurriyet
U.S. State Dept. against party closure - Turkiye
Ecevit: Secularism jeopardized if AKP in power - Sabah
World eyes on Turkish polls - Vatan

OPINION MAKERS

EU accession date depends on torture prevention - Cumhuriyet
Ankara to give counter dipnote to Moscow - Cumhuriyet
Election Board: Court's ruling on Erdogan won't affect polls
- Zaman
Human Rights Watch to issue 'head cover' report after polls
- Yeni Safak

FINANCIAL JOURNALS

Treasury U/S: Economic program going well - Dunya
Turkish businessmen to continue textile lobby in U.S. -
Finansal Forum

BRIEFING

EU troika: Officials from EU president Denmark, next-term president Greece, and the EU Commission, in Ankara for talks with Turkish officials, praised moves for reform and urged continued effort on implementation of regulations against torture. Ankara stressed that it would not accept conditions for an accession date, and added that Turkish support for a possible operation against Iraq should not be taken for granted. MFA Spokesman Buluc said Turkey hoped to begin accession negotiations with the EU in 2003. "Radikal" claims that Ankara hinted at an EU compromise on the issue of the European defense mechanism.

Cyprus: UN Cyprus envoy De Soto said after meeting MFA U/S Amb. Ziyal on Thursday that he hoped to see the Cyprus problem resolved before the EU Copenhagen Summit in December. De Soto denied reports that Annan would present the Turkish and Greek Cypriots a new plan for peace. The MFA praised Annan's 'good will mission,' but urged him not to interfere in direct talks between the two sides.

Papandreou in Istanbul: Greek Foreign Minister Papandreou met in Istanbul with his Turkish counterpart Gurel to watch the soccer game between Istanbul's Fenerbahce and Athens' Panathinaikos. Papandreou told the press that he backed the UN attempt to resolve the Cyprus issue, and reiterated support for Turkey's EU bid. Accompanied by the Panathinaikos soccer team, Papandreou paid a visit to the Fener Greek Patriarch Bartholomeos before the game. Bartholomeos voiced hope that the new Turkish government would contribute to the friendly atmosphere between Greece and Turkey.

MFA on Chechens: Dailies claim Ankara was preparing a note of protest to Moscow in order to reject allegations regarding the presence of Chechen organizations in Turkey. MFA Spokesman Buluc said on Thursday that there was no 'Chechen-Ichkeria organization' in Turkey. However, a CNN-Turk reporter showed Buluc a business card from a member of the organization. Buluc did not take this seriously,

pointing out that anybody could print a business card. Turkey's Ambassador to Moscow Kurtulus Taskent said that any outlawed Chechen organization raising money in Turkey would be closed, and added that Turkey was ready for cooperation with Russia in the fight against terror.

Election: The AKP leadership toned down criticism against President Sezer, and recognized that the presidency has the ultimate authority to appoint a new Prime Minister. Papers claim that after Erdogan was barred from taking office, a heated rivalry has erupted among possible AKP candidates Abdullah Gul, Bulent Arinc and Abdullatif Sener for the post of Prime Minister. DSP leader Ecevit accused AKP of hiding its true intentions, and said that Turkish secularism might be damaged if AKP came to power. Ecevit told "Milliyet" that he would leave DSP leadership within a year. The Constitutional Court is to decide on the injunction against Erdogan today. If the high court upholds the injunction, Erdogan will have to step down as AKP chairman. The High Election Board (YSK) said the name of Erdogan appearing on election ballot will not lead to an annulment of ballots. Papers report State Spokesman Boucher's response to a question, saying that the U.S. was against the closure of political parties for the peaceful expression of their views.

EDITORIAL OPINION

- a) Terrorism/Turkey-Russia
- b) Turkey-EU

"Russia is right"
Fatih Altayli commented on the recent tiff between Turkey and Russia over Chechen terrorists in the mass appeal "Hurriyet" (11/1): "Chechen behavior has served to justify the Russian depiction of Chechens as 'terrorists.' Russia is also accusing Turkey of supporting the Chechens. There is no 'state policy' to support Chechens, yet we should acknowledge that Turkey has presented a negative picture. . If we look at Belgian support for the DHKP-C, for example, Belgium can also claim that it does not have a state policy to support this terrorist organization. At the same time, Belgium does not interfere when DHKP-C gets organized in the country and is involved in illegal acts against Turkey, including terrorism. . There is simply no difference between what Belgium is doing to Turkey and what Turkey is doing to Russia. The Chechen groups are terrorists for Russia as much as the PKK or DHKP-C are terrorists for Turkey. Russia is right to criticize Turkey. Tolerance and friendly feelings do not mean supporting, or even ignoring, terrorism."

"Minds are even more confused!"
Sami Kohen commented on Turkey's EU prospects in the mass appeal Milliyet (11/1): "It looks like the upcoming EU summit will do its best not to send Turkey home empty-handed. The chances that Turkey will be given a clear and firm date for negotiations are nil. However, we might expect 'something like a calendar,' such as a conditional negotiation date. The EU conditions will not be new, but rather a series of expectations that Turkey fulfill all of its current obligations, particularly in the area of human rights and freedoms. . Let's hope that the Copenhagen summit reaches such a decision. If that happens, it is quite possible that Turkey would begin the negotiations with the EU during the Greek chairmanship. . Turkey should not sit and wait. As soon as a decision is given toward Turkey's negotiation process, we have a lot to accomplish. I hope by that time Turkey has a new government with the EU issue as one of its priorities."